

NZO Comments for December 3, 2019 City Council meeting

Noticing

One of the most important remaining NZO issues is Noticing. This is an issue that has long been a problem. Our residents often complain that they didn't know a project had even been proposed. They can't make their concerns known if they aren't aware of a project until after it is approved.

The current noticing ordinance allows the use of newspaper notices in place of mailings where notices would exceed 1,000. Many people don't get the News-Press or Independent nor do they have computers. This seriously limits public information and participation.

There was inadequate noticing of the New Zoning Ordinance being discussed. This is one of the City's most important projects and everyone in Goleta should have been noticed, no matter the cost. On October 26, 2019 I sent an email to the City Manager and City Council saying I had not seen public noticing and stating that "The City cannot claim that the NZO has had adequate noticing without a mailing to all residents." I still haven't received any response. I hope there will be citywide noticing when the final version of the NZO is heard by the City Council. This document is as important as the General Plan but has had far less public noticing.

The example used in the staff report was the November 5th NZO hearing. It is hard to believe the \$16,100 cost when in a Memorandum on April 17, 2019 the cost quoted for a similar mailing for the Solid Waste Collection Rate Increase was approximately \$5,000 including postage. There is no information on the cost of a large postcard notice which could be used in many cases. The number of notices on an issue could also be lessened by continuing the Public Hearing to a future meeting.

The PEC at the November 13, 2019 meeting pointed out that "Mailed noticing in both English and Spanish would help overcome barriers to participation due to language and afford all members of the community an opportunity to provide input on projects of citywide importance. The PEC considered the effectiveness of mailed noticing to be worth associated mailing costs to the City."

Lack of information has always been a problem for the public, now you have an opportunity to show the residents that you want them to know about the important projects. Please direct staff that you want the NZO to have mailed notices required for projects with more than 1,000 recipients.

City Projects

The public wants the opportunity to comment on City Projects. Any large City projects should have a noticed public hearing. I would recommend this be done by requiring every major project have a Development Plan with a Planning Commission hearing, not just ones in the Coastal

Zone. They usually push through the project on the Consent Agenda with little public knowledge of them.

The City Projects example of Ekwill/Fowler is a poor one since this project has taken many years with many changes and some hearings held in other jurisdictions. It also had more review because it was a transportation project with SBCAG and CTC review.

ESHA

The Streamside Protection Area buffer should be a 50 foot minimum buffer like other ESHAs. Just because the General Plan permits reductions to 25 feet doesn't mean that is what the public wants. It was lowered from the 50 feet in the original General Plan to 25 feet by a developer's City Council. SPAs need protection and the public has indicated that they want the maximum protection not the lessening of buffers pushed by staff. If the Planning Department had cared about the ESHA issues, the Creek and Watershed Management Plan and Tree Protection Ordinance would have been completed now.

Large Residential Care Facilities

Large Residential Care Facilities should not be permitted in RS and RP districts. It would be too intrusive in the neighborhood. No one in single family neighborhoods wants up to 13 people living next door. It brings extra noise, traffic, parking problems, and potentially law enforcement problems. Homeowners bought their homes in RS and RP zones because they wanted quiet, peaceful, low traffic, family neighborhoods where they would have a stable environment. Large Residential Care Facilities are inappropriate for single family neighborhoods.

Viewshed Protection

I strongly support Cecilia Brown's recommendation for protecting Goleta's viewshed. There needs to be protection in place or we will have new development reduce what little viewshed we have left.

Substantial Conformity

There needs to be public review of Substantial Conformity Determinations. This has been abused and the public needs to know when it is being considered. I support George Relles' recommendations to replace the proposed language regarding Substantial Conformity Determinations to provide the public, a. Email notice only to those who sign up for such notices, b. A public hearing only if a member of the public requests it, and c. An appeal ability to the Goleta Planning Commission.

Thank you for considering my comments, Barbara
December 1, 2019